

Weekly Activity Update

February 3 – February 11 • Issue 74

Kam Air Crash

A Kabul-bound Boeing 737 of Afghanistan's first private airlines, Kam Air, crashed February 3rd, with 104 people on board. The crash site is on Sirai Mount in Khak-e Jabar district, about 1,333 meters high and located 35 kilometers southeast of Kabul. The plane was declared missing after it went off the radar, but the wreckage was located on Saturday, February 5th. The 737 was on a regularly scheduled flight from Herat to Kabul when it was diverted to Pakistan due to heavy snow in Kabul.

Cristin (Cristi) Gadue, Amy Lynn Niebling, and Carmen Urdeneta were supporting Management Sciences for Health of Cambridge, MA on the USAID Afghanistan's Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-based Healthcare Program (REACH). The Louis Berger Group Inc. which is working on the Afghanistan Road Project lost two road engineers on the flight. Mark Humphries, from Texas, and Gianluigi Barattin, an Italian citizen. In addition, six Turkish subcontractors to Louis Berger, from the firm of Gulsan-Cukurova also lost their lives: Mustafa Kemal Dündar, Mustafa Firat, Mehmet Korkmaz, Erkan Helvacioğlu, Ayhan Birci, and Ahmet Hamdi Saral.

United States Agency for International Development staff mourns their loss and wishes to express our appreciation of their commitment to helping the people of Afghanistan.

Expanding Educational Opportunity

Primary Education

USAID continues its long-term efforts to expand educational opportunities in Afghanistan through its Afghanistan Primary Education Program (APEP). One component of this three-year long program is to provide textbooks, teacher training and accelerated learning for over-aged students. To date, more than sixteen million textbooks have been printed and distributed to the district level. Distribution continues from the district level to the school level.

Few Afghan teachers have received formal training and many live in mountainous, remote areas where winter travel is difficult and few training opportunities exist. APEP developed a teacher training program via radio, to help those teachers to learn current teaching techniques. To date, 43,000 teachers have been trained by radio, and 6,819 through formal programs. Currently, 150 teacher trainers are enrolled in a master training program sponsored by APEP and implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. This particular training program is expected to be completed February 21st. Years of Taliban rule severely restricted primary school attendance. Now, older boys need to be caught up and girls of all ages need the educational access they were denied. APEP accelerated learning programs helps over-age students reach their appropriate grade level as quickly as possible, before they are forced to drop out due to economic or early marriage reasons. APEP met its 2004 target to enroll 170,000 students in its Accelerated Learning programs and it continues to assess gaps in enrollment figures. Their current focus is on the common increase in drop outs at Grade 4. This trend is due to curriculum expansion and more frequent testing in this particular grade. In addition to this trend, the severe winter can hinder enrollment in some provinces.



APEP students at a girls school in Jalalabad, Nangahar Province



Girls classroom uses textbooks distributed under APEP

Infrastructure

Rehabilitation Of Economic Facilities And Services (REFS) Program

The REFS program supports economic recovery and political stability in Afghanistan by repairing key infrastructure and strengthening operation and maintenance capability. REFS consists of three components: (1) rehabilitation of selected infrastructure; (2) institutional strengthening of selected public services; and (3) purchase, importation, and distribution to subcontractors of construction materials and supplies not available in Afghanistan.

One of the REFS irrigation projects is the emergency rehabilitation on the Sar-e Haus Dam. Emergency repairs have been completed and permanent improvements are underway. Excavation equipment is on site, stone is being delivered, the temporary site access road is cut in, and cement has been delivered. Work on the dam is progressing and local Afghan laborers are commended for working under harsh weather conditions.

The Shah Rawan Intake is another REFS project that has made significant progress. Repair and reinforcement of entry channel embankments is underway and rehabilitation continues on the 42 branch canal gates. As capacity building is key component of many USAID projects, a steel fabrication workshop will be incorporated into the rehabilitation of the branch canal gates.



Local Afghan laborers on the Sar-e-Haus Dam



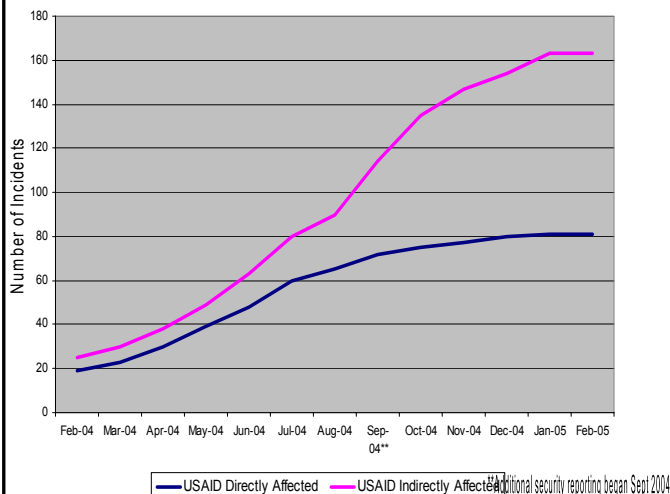
Workers at the Shah Rawan Intake

Security Incidents

Note: Hostile attacks are reported through USAID's security contractors and the Associated Press

- **Number of Hostile Attacks:** During this reporting period (January 31st – February 7th), there were no attacks on USAID related activities and/or staff. In addition, there were no reported injuries or casualties.
- **USAID Related:** During this reporting period, there were no hostile attacks.
- **Landmines and IED attacks:** Landmines and IEDs (Imbedded Explosive Devices) continue to play a significant role in Afghanistan's security challenges. For example, in just the last eleven days of January, there were at least four major landmine and IED attacks reported. The attacks resulted in an array of victims including US security forces, road reconstruction workers, and Afghan government officials. Security forces included injuries to USPI employees, as well as the deaths of an Afghan District Police Chief and his family. Two separate teams of foreign reconstruction workers witnessed explosions while working on the roads; one attack resulted in injuries. The USG continues its consistent de-mining efforts as incorporated in security and reconstruction programs.

Cumulative Hostile Attacks Against Aid Programs



Hostile Attacks by Month

